

Claims

- [c1] 1. An industrial PC comprising:
a faceplate disposed on a first end of a housing of a PC, said faceplate having a predetermined first color characteristic and being substantially planar;
a differentiation plate having a predetermined second color characteristic removably disposed on said faceplate;
said differentiation plate having an exposed first section which is substantially planar and which is parallel to said faceplates, and an exposed section which forms an edge of said front end and is substantially orthogonal to said faceplate; and
said rigid differentiation plate being coupled to said faceplate in a mechanical, non-adhesive, coupling.
- [c2] 2. An industrial PC of claim 1 wherein said differentiation plate is a rigid "L"-shaped member having along one edge, ears for insertion into voids in said faceplate.
- [c3] 3. An industrial PC of claim 2 wherein said differentiation plate is removable from said faceplate by rotation around an interface line which exists between the faceplate and the differentiation plate along a bottom edge of the differentiation plate.
- [c4] 4. An industrial PC of claim 3 wherein said rotation around an interface line is assisted by a tool having a front protuberance thereon for insertion in a top gap between a top side of said differentiation plate and a top faceplate side of said faceplate.
- [c5] 5. An industrial PC of claim 4 wherein said top gap is above a lip region on an opposite end of said rigid "L"-shaped member with respect to said ears and wherein said lip region is thinner in its smallest dimension with respect to a smallest dimension of all other portions of said differentiation plate.
- [c6] 6. An industrial PC of claim 1 wherein said edge of said PC is a top edge.
- [c7] 7. A computer system comprising:
a rack having a plurality of slots therein for receiving a plurality of industrial

PCs;

a first industrial PC having a first primary functional characteristic, said first industrial PC disposed in said rack;

a second industrial PC having a second primary functional characteristic, said second industrial PC disposed in said rack; and,

wherein said first and said second industrial PC each include a non-identical differentiation plate thereon, where a difference between each non-identical differentiation plate is representative of a difference of said first primary functional characteristic and said second primary functional characteristic; wherein said non-identical differentiation plate forms a front edge and an orthogonal edge of an industrial PC.

[c8]

8.A computer system of claim 7 further comprising:

a third industrial PC having a third differentiation plate thereon having a visually similar characteristic with respect to the non-identical differentiation plate of said first industrial PC and having a visually dissimilar characteristic with to the non-identical differentiation plate of said second industrial PC, wherein said third industrial PC has a third primary functional characteristic which is identical to said first primary functional characteristic; wherein said orthogonal edge is a top edge.

[c9]

9.A computer system of claim 8 further comprising a tool for engagement with and extracting a differentiation plate from said third industrial PC.

[c10]

10.A computer system of claim 8 which includes a differentiation plate which is rigid and mechanically coupled to said first industrial PC, through a non-adhesive interface.

[c11]

11.A method of differentiating industrial computers disposed in a rack comprising the steps of:

providing a first differentiation plate on a first industrial PC disposed in a rack, the first industrial PC having a first predetermined functional characteristic; providing a second differentiation plate on a second industrial PC disposed in the rack, the second industrial PC having a second predetermined functional characteristic;

providing a third differentiation plate on a third industrial PC disposed in the rack, the third industrial PC having a third predetermined functional characteristic;

wherein said first and said second differentiation plate have an identical first color characteristic and said first and said second predetermined functional characteristic are identical; and,

wherein said third differentiation plate has a contrasting color characteristic which is non-identical with respect to said first color characteristic;

wherein said first differentiation plate forms an exposed front edge and an exposed second edge of said first industrial PC, which exposed second edge is orthogonal to said exposed front edge.

- [c12] 12.A method of claim 11 wherein said first, second, and third differentiation plates are removable;
and wherein said second edge is a top edge of said first industrial PC.
- [c13] 13.A method of claim 12 wherein said first, second, and third differentiation plates are rigid and "L" shaped.
- [c14] 14.A method of claim 13 wherein said first, second, and third differentiation plates are mechanically coupled to a PC through a non-adhesive interface.
- [c15] 15.A method of claim 14 wherein said first, second, and third differentiation plates are removable from a PC via a downward pivoting action.
- [c16] 16.A method of claim 15 wherein said downward pivoting action is induced by a force applied by a tool having a protuberance thereon which extends into a gap between each of said first differentiation plates and a PC faceplate.
- [c17] 17.A method of claim 16 wherein said first differentiation plate is a smooth surface.
- [c18] 18.A method of claim 17 further comprising the step of:
using a marker to generate identification information on said first differentiation plate.
- [c19] 19.A system comprising:

a first industrial computer;
a second industrial computer;
a rack containing said first and said second industrial computers; and,
mechanical, non-adhesive means for visual differentiation of an exposed front side and an exposed orthogonal second side of each of said first industrial computer and said second industrial computer as a function of functional characteristics of said first industrial computer and said second industrial computer.

[c20] 20.A system of claim 19 wherein said mechanical, non-adhesive means for visual differentiation are color-coded rigid differentiation plates; and said exposed orthogonal second side is an exposed top side.